

TWO 4475. CC. 114
SERMONS,

PREACHED IN THE
CATHEDRAL CHURCH AT
WORCESTER,

BEFORE
MY LORDS ~~THE~~ JUDGES OF ASSIZE,

On the 11th of MARCH

AND

The 22d of JULY, 1792.

BY THE REV. ROBERT LUCAS, B. D. K
RECTOR OF RIPPLE.

TEWKESBURY:
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TWO

SERMONS

PREACHED IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH AT

WIMBORNE



By the Rev. ROBERT LUCAS, B.D.

Rectory, Wimborne

TWENTY-NINE

PRINTED BY BIDE AND SON,

For J. HODGSON, NEW-CORNS-LANE, LONDON.

TO
FLEETWOOD PARKHURST Esq.

HIGH SHERIFF
OF THE COUNTY OF WORCESTER,

THE FOLLOWING
S E R M O N S,

(PREACHED AT HIS REQUEST)

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS VERY FAITHFUL

AND OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

TO
FLEETWOOD PARKHURST FMS

HIGH SHERRIFF

OF THE COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE



S. F. R. 1. 2.

(DEPOSITED AT HIS RESIDENCE)

AND DEPOSITED AT HIS RESIDENCE

AND DEPOSITED AT HIS RESIDENCE

AND DEPOSITED AT HIS RESIDENCE

THE AUTHOR.

S E R M O N I.

1 P E T E R, 2. 17.

FEAR GOD, HONOUR THE KING.

WITHOUT the sanctions of Religion and Laws, it is impossible that a numerous and extensive society can exist for any long time in security and happiness. Such is the constitution of Human Nature, that it is difficult even with these sanctions to keep men within the bounds of their duty : and this difficulty arises as much from fictitious as real wants ; as much from the excess of civilization as from the rude and unbridled propensities of our nature.

If we regard man before he is under Restrictions, divine and human, we find him
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headstrong and ferocious; giving vent to his passions whenever they are excited; taking immediate revenge on his supposed enemies; and, in short, pursuing the dictates of his own mind, regardless of the injuries and misery he may bring upon others.

As soon as this complicate being mixes with his kind in society, he is generally if not always under the controul of some religion and law, how imperfect soever they may be. The former may be nothing but superstition and the latter full of absurdity. But, being such as are adopted by the community, of which he is a member, the individual acquiesces therewith, and if he offend, submits to the punishment annexed to the violation of them.

If we trace society, from the tribe which has no settled abode, to the more established community, which possesses a local habitation and a name; and from this thro' all its several gradations, till we arrive at an extensive one in the highest state of civilization; we shall find these societies, in all their variations, held together by some appropriate religion

religion and by the sanctions of their own laws.

The nations in the interior parts of America, whose occupation is war, confine their hostilities to their enemies and are closely attached to the interests of their brethren. Their unwritten laws, and their religion, threaten with punishment, present and future, a defection from those interests; and they are urged to deeds of personal bravery by the hopes of happiness hereafter with departed heroes of their own tribe.—The vagrant Arab, whose life is passed in plundering, and often murdering, the stranger, is true to his fraternity, obeys the laws which hold them together, and submits to the dictates of a religion, which has been formed for his convenience and condemns not those iniquities, in which his society partakes in common with himself.

Those numerous communities, which have lately been discovered in the South Seas, are all influenced by something which wears the shape and assumes the power of religion and laws, and which binds them together and secures their existence. So little as the inhabitants of these islands are removed from a
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state of nature, it is no matter of surprise, since men are every where the same, that so few crimes of an atrocious nature, injurious to society, are found among them. But, the difficulty ceases, when we consider the smallness and compactness of these communities, and the almost impossibility there is, that an offender should escape the vigilance of his governors, or break the barriers, which a boisterous element has formed around him.

Whenever a nation, large or small, ceases to be under the influence of laws (which are understood to be such as have the general welfare for their object) we find that anarchy, confusion and every evil work is the consequence. Neither the governors, nor the governed, being under any common engagements for the public security, the property, the persons, the lives of the community become a prey to their rulers, and to the violence and rapacity of each other.

This is remarkably verified among the petty states of Africa, where the several communities, particularly on the western coast, are not only in a state of continual warfare with their neighbours, but, horrible to say, the
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the individuals, of which they are composed, are in perpetual hostility with each other ! Their persons, and every thing that is dear to man, every thing that administers comfort and solace to him, in his passage thro' life, is not secure for a single moment. Treachery, rapine and destruction prowl thro' the land at large and snatch from them every blessing which a benignant providence intended they should enjoy in security and peace.

But, such a total relaxation of all public order and discipline, such a general prevalence of uncontrouled iniquity must certainly be owing to some *exterior* cause, which overcomes the natural desire of all men (how rude soever their state) to live in peace and security ; and by wholesome laws, to put a period to their political miseries.

I blush to touch on the ground of these miseries, when my own country takes so large a share in promoting them. I blush to see the pretended advantages of commerce, private or public, held up as a plea for breaking every moral obligation, and violating every duty man owes to man. Commerce, even-handed commerce, was not intended

tended to be the scourge of mankind, but their comfort and convenience ; her natural and unpolluted office is to connect the various nations of the world, how remote soever, by pleasing chains of communication, by fair and harmless interchanges : Nor can her interests (for there is a righteous providence !) long continue to be supported by the perpetration of every atrocious deed, by breaking asunder those bonds of affection, by which nature herself holds us together in our dearest relations—the parent to the child, the husband to the wife, brother to brother, and friend to friend.* All these grateful connexions, the dearest pledges of human happiness in this life, are burst and torn asunder by the merciless nature of a detestable and nefarious traffic, disgraceful to humanity. We may lament over these wretched nations in the words of the Prophet; *“ Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire, your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by strangers.”*§

* A vote has since passed the House of Commons for the final Abolition of the Slave-Trade on the 1st of January, 1796.

§ Isaiah 1. 7.

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But, I dare not pursue the subject. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to infer, from the political wretchedness of these nations, that, in the absence of well-regulated laws, and the acknowledged principles of religion and morality, men will inevitably become a prey to each other; society capable of producing the greatest blessings, will produce the greatest evils, and the crowded city become worse than the howling desert.

If in these nations, but little removed from a state of nature, religion and laws be necessary for the welfare and happiness of the community, they will be no less so for those nations which are in the highest state of civilization: nay, they appear more necessary, and that in proportion to the extent and complex texture of such societies. Man, in a state of nature, is certainly altogether unamiable and ferocious in his designs and actions; but he is, in general, easily satisfied. His pursuits are simple and extend but little farther than his natural wants. Passions and motives, which, in polished societies, urge men to criminal actions, lie at rest in his bosom for want of objects to excite them.

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Man born, therefore, in a civilized state is a very different being; different, I mean, in the extent of his knowledge and the multitude of his conceptions ; in the exercise of his affections, his friendships, his dislikes, his enmities ; in the nature and variety of his pursuits, and in the art and ability he uses for obtaining the objects of those pursuits : all which effects, common to civilization, are so many reasons for securing the public safety by the irresistible force of Religion and Laws, whose tremendous sanctions may restrain men from criminal acts, and check and purify their minds from the projection of injury to the property or the persons of their neighbours.

The bulk of a polished society is unquestionably inclined to peace and to the performance of moral obligations: and altho' every individual in such a state must, from the improvement of his mind and the example of the greater part of those with whom he lives, necessarily have obtained stronger notions of common justice and other moral duties, yet, with all his advantages, he is still *Man* : the same headstrong and ungovernable passions, which, in a state of nature, urge him to acts
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of outrage and desperation, still hold a place in his breast, and unless they are checked and appeased by the mild influence of religion and the sense of moral duties, or by the fears of punishment, temporal and future, they would perpetually break forth into acts of violence and disturb the public peace and security.

The crimes, too, which such men would commit, if unrestrained, would increase in proportion to the cunning and address, which their improved abilities would enable them to employ. In such a society, therefore, if the public mind be not impressed with religious truths, the greatest political evils must inevitably ensue. Hence, too, the necessity of the constant appearance and proximity of the active, influential energies of public government, to correct and purify the corrupt and mischievous part of the community. Hence the necessity of laws and the terrors of punishment to menace and prevent the machinations of wicked men, whom more generous motives cannot influence, and whose ingenuity in contriving methods to injure and defraud the public render new sanctions continually necessary

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to counteract and repel them. The edge and keenness of the public mind, the natural consequence of civilization, will account for the multiplicity and severity of penal statutes, in a well-regulated state ; laws must necessarily keep pace with the temper and bent of the times, and be so contrived as to meet, not only the daring robber in his open assault, but the designing knave also, in his dark and intricate subterfuges.

The excellence, therefore, of Religion and Laws for the preservation of the peace of society, shows the propriety of the Apostle's advice in the text. He is writing to the christians of the provinces of the Lesser Asia; and, in pointing out rules and instructions for their proper conduct, with regard to the society in which they lived, he concludes the whole with these admonitions—" *Fear God ; Honor the King.*"

The wisdom, and even necessity, of following this advice applies to all societies, as well as to the converted christians of the Roman provinces.—What is principally meant by *fearing God*, in this place, is, that our minds should be impressed with a constant perception of a superintending providence and the moral government of the world ;
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that we should possess an awful sense of that future account we must give of our actions before the just tribunal of God, when we shall receive according to our works. This is to *fear God*, and the apostle knew it would be the best security for keeping men within the bounds of their moral obligations.

Without such security, what would be the fate of innocence, when joined, as it often is, with weakness and simplicity? How could her feeble efforts resist the strength of the powerful and the artifice of the wicked? The most atrocious crimes would often be committed by men, whose situations or arts placed them beyond the reach of the magistrate, unless they were, in some measure, checked in their purposes by a just *Fear of God*, by the dread of offending the sovereign of the world, the broad eye of whose providence beholds the evil and the just, and who will punish or reward them according to their deserts.

If it were possible to banish this principle from society, Government would be deprived of its chief bulwark and support. What trust, what confidence could possibly enter
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into the common and various transactions of life, between man and man, unless each party suppose the other under the influence of religion ; unless there be a mutual persuasion that each is actuated by a consciousness of the divine presence, and that what is done between them is *done in truth and righteousness.*

Without the prevalence of this principle civil government would be impracticable and wholly insufficient for the purposes for which it is established ; namely, the peace and order of the community. But when the fear of God goes hand in hand with the fear of the magistrate, government not only becomes practicable, but is productive of the greatest blessings to society. They, who dispense and execute the laws, go to their awful tasks with satisfaction to themselves and advantage to the public, when they are persuaded that the information and evidence, which are to determine and decide the cause, are given by men who are conscious of the divine presence ; and the magistrate himself, being under the same conviction, will, to the best of his knowledge, decree what is right unto all men. Regularity and order will thus happily prevail generally thro' the
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community : the progress of justice will not be marked with the disclosure of so many scenes of horror, nor will mercy be forbidden to take her share in the necessary work of correcting the slight disorders which will sometimes unavoidably disturb the public peace.

The dictates of Religion, however, true and satisfactory as they appear to persons of reflection, have never been found to have so universal and powerful an influence on the minds of all the individuals, who compose an extensive society, as to render the magistrate's office and the sanctions of Human Laws unnecessary. The wants, vices and passions of some, which urge them to commit depredations on the property, and assaults on the persons of their neighbours; and the propensity there is in others to disturb the peace of the government, under which they live, induced the Apostle to add a very important and necessary admonition; namely—*To Honour the King.*

It is evident that this injunction means that men should honour the laws and the government, under which they live in peace and security. The words cannot regard
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the homage due merely to the person of a king; but rather to the authority with which he is invested for the public good. The distance of the Asiatic christians from the seat of the Roman Empire, forbade such personal homage; and if that had been possible, the prince who held the sceptre, at the time the Apostle wrote, was a man, whose personal vices rendered him rather an object of detestation and contempt, than of honour and respect; and are, happily for us, a striking contrast to those eminent private virtues, which adorn the character of our own gracious Sovereign.

The honour that is here principally meant, therefore, is that which is due to the laws of the society in which we live; and which comprehends, also, due submission and obedience to the magistrates, and particularly to the king, the chief magistrate of all, who are appointed to execute those laws for the preservation of the peace of the community. They are "*sent for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.*"

If the laws of any country, therefore, are founded in justice, and the regulations of govern-

government are such as conduce to the happiness and security of the society, for whose benefit they are intended, it is folly in the extreme for any one to resist such laws, or refuse to pay implicit obedience to them. His own personal safety and welfare depend on the general observance of those laws, and the effects their sanctions have on the minds of other men. For, if any individual think he has a right to indulge himself in violating them, another may do the same, and the misery or destruction of both may be the consequence.

The ideas, therefore, which some have formed of *Liberty* are, when considered with regard to *society*, altogether visionary. Men must be content to give up some part of their own freedom, or rather their own humour, if they would secure the enjoyment of the blessings of society, or those of providence. Their own existence depends on the general submission to, and the due execution of, the public laws. For, unless the protection of government be his defense, every man would be liable to the assaults and injuries of his turbulent and malicious neighbour; and what happiness could any one enjoy who is
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not sure of the safety of his person, nor the rewards of his industry, for a single hour. In large and crowded societies men would, without the intervening arm of Government, be more subject to such outrages, than in any other. The rich and poor, the happy and miserable, the feeble and the strong, the wicked and the just, tread, as it were, upon each other's heels. There is no local separation between them, to soften the envy of different conditions, and quiet the jealous competitions of equality. The abundance and apparent felicity of some, the wants and fancied misery of others, and the unruly passions of all, would continually meet in conflict, disturb the public tranquillity, and introduce general anarchy and confusion. Universal liberty, therefore, in society, is nothing better than universal misery.

It is prudent in nations, as well as individuals, to profit by examples; and it is a duty which every man owes to the public welfare, how obscure soever his station, or confined his ability, to guard the public against the excesses and errors of the times. We have before us, in a neighbouring state, the mischievous effects of the dissolution of
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legal government. Men, in the eager pursuit of liberty, generally go beyond their object. There can be no liberty enjoyed in society without restraint; and they, who fancied they had broken the bands and thrown off the yoke of slavery, only find that they have let loose the public upon one another; and, instead of producing the common happiness, they are surprised to find universal discontent.

We are not so selfish, and greedy of the blessings of providence and freedom, as not to wish that others may possess them as well as ourselves. There is no liberal man, who enjoys the public happiness diffused by the free government of this country, but must rejoice at the establishment of more political liberty, in *that* nation, than it enjoyed under its former government. But, there is no tyranny or oppression worse than that of an ungovernable people. Any government is better than none at all.

The same philanthropy, therefore, which induces us to hope that the French nation may enjoy more liberty than they formerly possessed, compels us to wish also, that they may have less than they now exercise. A

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dissolution of all order and controul is not liberty. Nothing reigns but confusion and outrage; whose standard the multitude are too apt to follow and support. The nerves and sinews of efficient government, which connected the state with every inferior department and with every individual, and held them in necessary submission, are broken asunder; and acts of violence, worse probably than those which were complained of, may possibly be necessary to unite them again, and restore them to their wonted tone and energy.

It will be found a difficult task, indeed, for those, who have assumed the imperium of the country, to bring back the public mind, relaxed and loosened as it is, to order and obedience. Instead of securing public liberty, they have opened the flood-gates of political and moral licentiousness. After having rashly dissolved the charm of power, they would now menace with what they before contemned. But, they lift the sceptre of authority in vain. They have taught others to despise order and controul, as well as themselves; and none regards their decrees more than suits his own humour or convenience.

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It seems impossible that a government, so ill-conducted and so powerless, can continue long. Lifted suddenly, by a fortuitous concurrence of circumstances, into new and lofty situations, the present rulers (if there be any rulers at all), unused to their occupations, are embarrassed by the folly and the frenzy of their own decisions. We lament and shudder at the portentous horrors, which hang over their indiscretions. They have presumed too much (a common error) on the sudden munificence of fortune. Prodigals and spendthrifts, they have done nothing with foresight or moderation. The new-found spring of liberty was too strong a temptation for their insatiable thirst; and they have drunk too deeply of the pleasurable draught to stand their ground.

One single stroke, that which attempted to annihilate all rank and subordination, was of itself sufficient to overturn their fabric. By this decree, they created within the bosom of their country, an immense and potent body of enemies. Property generally attends rank, and power always adheres to property. They drew their leveling system from their transatlantic connexions: but, in their eager-
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ness to retaliate on their superiors, they had neither discernment nor deliberation enough to perceive the different circumstances of the two countries. The American States have just commenced their political being. They are a group of infants, whose designs and occupations are almost wholly directed towards obtaining the means of existence and growth. They are struggling thro' the perils of early life; and know not what course they may take, what manners and habits they may assume, when their joints and limbs are complete and firmly united, and they feel the full strength and powers of manhood. In it's more adult age, America may probably adopt and acknowledge those various ranks and conditions, which it now affects to despise; or which are, at present, incompatible with its business and employments.

Society cannot, in fact, be any where reduced to a level. Property and personal ability will always assume the higher ground, although there be no *nominal* distinction. But, surely, there will be found some difference, in forbearing to create rank in one country, never accustomed to it; and reducing all to a degrading level, in another, long used to the

the distinctions of hereditary greatness and precedence. The French Democracy, therefore, committed an act of fatal indiscretion, when they struck their Princes and their Nobles from their lofty and long-established seats with contumely and insult. Their oppressive privileges might have been sacrificed safely to the public cause, which was all that it needed. But, all conciliatory measures were set at naught; all ancient claims, privileges, rights—all personal consequence, established custom and common justice.

Decrees, however, which cut away the outward trappings and ornaments of rank, cannot mingle their possessors with the multitude. They cannot level and debase the mind; which still retains its aspiring elasticity; and like a spring, depressed by an incumbent weight, is continually endeavouring to reach its former elevation. The French Revolutionists now feel the unconquered and growing force of this despised power. Property and character begin to exert their natural and unavoidable influence. Those gradual and varying heights which formerly met the eye and diversified and adorned the country, have been overwhelmed, it is true, with an irresistible torrent of confusion;

on ; but, when the troubled waters have spent their force and passed away, the same eminences will probably again appear in their accustomed stations.

To gain the great and important object, the Liberty of the country, there was no need of this violence. All parties might have been united in the common cause ; and, with such a pattern of political perfection as the Constitution of this country presented, the Liberty of the French nation might have been happily and peaceably secured. Such is the liberty we wish them—a liberty chastised and corrected by law and justice, subordination and public order.

We cannot but consider it inauspicious for any system of government, when the promoters and conductors thereof show little or no respect to the interests of Religion ; without the influence of which, the public can neither be expected to pay any regard to their social and moral duties, nor to the dictates of their rulers. It is inauspicious, I say, tho' not to be wondered at among other usurpations, to see true piety and solid wisdom attempted to be thrust aside by a coxcomb philosophy, dressed up in the smiling pertness and frippery of the country and the times ;

times ; to see the collected wisdom and power of the nation (as they affect to call it) degrade and even burlesque its own dignity and that of the people, by decreeing public honours to defunct Infidels and Satyrists; by disturbing the quiet of the oblivious grave, to bring forth, translate, and canonize the rotten remains of Debauchees and Wits !— These are certainly but indifferent proofs of massy wisdom and collected experience ; nor do they indicate any strength or stability in a constitution, formed by men who were weak enough so to insult the feelings and the piety of the sober part of the community. Happily the common sense and judgment of mankind will prevent the mischief of such indiscretions. They will not suffer the venerable seats of true religion and sound philosophy, to be usurped and disgraced by such dangerous substitutes as folly, presumption, and vice.

What may be the fate of a country, surrounded with so many and great dangers, time only can disclose. May the contention end without the horrors of war, in the establishment of good order, and in the just liberties and happiness of the whole nation !

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But, from scenes, which portend so many evils, we gladly turn to the contemplation of the happy and peaceful state of our own country ; and solace ourselves in the enjoyment of a glorious and firmly-established constitution, the envy of surrounding nations, dispensing freedom with a broad and liberal hand, and in as large measures as are consistent with the good order and common welfare of society. Beyond these limits, all is mischief and confusion. In attempting to gain too much, men often loose what they already possess. In pursuing the phantom of their own imaginations, they quit the substance, which they might have enjoyed in peace and security. We are taught, by the example before us, to set a just value on the blessings and security of a legal and peaceful government, and to dread the relaxation of it's powers, as the greatest political evil that can possibly befall us.

To conclude :—We have seen that, without the influence of Religion and the sanction of Human Laws, society cannot exist in peace and security. The peculiar advantages of the British Constitution, in Church and State, in providing in these respects for
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the instruction, and securing the political happiness, of the people, deserve especial notice on such solemnities. Indeed, at the present period, the public cannot be too strongly impressed with the excellence of that Glorious Constitution, under which we enjoy every blessing which Liberty can bestow. Time will not now permit me to enter on the subject. It is of sufficient magnitude and importance to require a distinct discourse: and, as I shall probably have an opportunity of addressing nearly the same audience, on a similar occasion, hereafter, it shall be reserved till such opportunity occurs.

Meanwhile, my Brethren, let us all, of whatever rank or station we be, by our example, precepts, and influence, promote, to the utmost of our power, the wise and important doctrine of the text. Let us, by the piety and decorum of our own lives, recommend submission and obedience to the Supreme Being, and to the Laws of our country: or, in the Apostle's words, Let us *Fear God and Honour the King.*

S E R M O N II.

1. P E T E R, 2. 17.

FEAR GOD, HONOUR THE KING.

IT was on a solemnity similar to the present, and to an audience nearly the same as that now before me, that I delivered, a few months ago, a Discourse from these words. I then pointed out, as the occasion and the text suggested, the necessity of the influence of Religion and the sanction of human Laws to preserve the good order and happiness of every society, and particularly a civilized and extensive one; and I concluded with expressing my intention of renewing the subject on the present occasion, for the purpose of pointing out the singular excell-

excellence of our Constitution, in providing in these respects for the peace and happiness of the community.

I shall, therefore, in the first place, advert to our Church Establishment, as a general, excellent, and unceasing means of instructing the people in their most important interests, by impressing their minds with a proper sense of their moral and religious obligations; and, secondly, I shall consider the Civil part of our Constitution, and the nature and execution of the Laws: Nor can I omit, in times like these, when on the subject of the constitution of my country, to assert it's unparalleled excellence in a most important point, and in which it exceeds all others, that of securing the just rights and liberties of the people.

And, in the first place; with respect to the care, which the constitution has taken to provide for the religious and moral instruction of the people, I must observe, that the depravity of human nature is such, and such the relation men stand in to their Creator, as accountable beings, that the necessity of this instruction is obvious to the most common understanding. As all men partake by
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nature of this depravity and this important and spiritual relation, it is as obvious that the instruction so necessary should be general among the people, that all men should be informed of their duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves.

All just Laws, divine and human, are founded on the principles of Religion and Morality ; and there is scarcely any violation of these principles that is not punishable by the Laws of this Country. But, there seems a degree of injustice in punishing men for committing crimes, who have never been afforded an opportunity of knowing (by *precept* as well as example) their duties and obligations.

But, how will the people at large, those especially who have most need of instruction, be informed of their duties and obligations without Instructors? And whence Instructors, proper ones at least, without an Establishment? By which a sufficient body of men, found competent to the important task by previous education and trials, are dispersed throughout the community, and whose office and duty it is to instruct the young
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and ignorant, to console the aged and the feeble, and to reclaim the profligate and vicious.

By these means, there is not a corner of this extensive society, however remote and obscure, that is not, in some degree, enlightened by the rays of divine knowledge; none so corrupt, that is not, in some degree, corrected by lessons of piety and virtue. No man, when arraigned at the bar of justice here, or the tribunal of God hereafter, can plead in excuse for his crimes, that he had no opportunity of knowing his duty.

The appointment, therefore, of public instructors, is a measure so wise and proper, that the history of the world scarcely affords an instance of the existence of any civilized country without such instructors; or, in other words, without a religious establishment. Men must know their duty, in order to perform it; and every government feels so conscious of its own weakness and insufficiency without the force of Religion and Morality, acting on the public affections, that it invites them to a close and indissoluble union with its own powers, as the only
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means of preserving the general tranquillity and happiness.

The enemies of religion and establishments call this union an expedient of the state, to aid it's own views. Be it so. But it is an expedient founded on truth and necessity ; an expedient highly favourable to the cause of religion, without which, it seems, the welfare of society cannot be secured. It is certainly the purpose of every government to maintain its authority and preserve the public happiness. To invite, therefore, the aid of the common principles of religion is a wise and prudent measure. But religion is not, therefore, a mere agent, acting at the will of the state. No ; it is an independent and general principle, lodged in the breast of every man, which wants only to be excited into action to produce what the state wishes to secure, and without which it cannot long exist, the moral conduct of the people.

But, it will be said that states have been found to change their religion with the change of sentiment in the people. True. Without such compliance, the Established religion

religion of this country had not been Christian, had not been Protestant. But, altho' the state thus conforms to the opinion of the people, it loses not the substantial aid of religion ; it changes not that part of it, which is allowedly the most serviceable to the state and profitable to the professor : I mean the morality of religion. The moral part, certainly, of the Christian Religion, in all its divisions and dissents is the same. Men are, we trust, every where taught to adore their creator, to do justice, and to live peaceably in their stations.

It makes not, therefore, against the truth of religion, that the state adopts the persuasion of the people. It's powerful assistance is, indeed, an expedient, but no state has force enough to create or annihilate it at it's pleasure. It's general principles, founded in truth, exist independently of human power, and, without those principles, that power is found insufficient to controul mankind and secure the blessings of society.

The Religion of Christ, which happily prevails in these kingdoms, rests not it's truth on Establishments. But, even on this ground

ground it may claim some merit, since it has been adopted and established, as the true religion, in almost all the improved and polished nations of the world. But, as we know that if a religion be not true in itself, no establishment of it can make it so; it will be allowed also, that if a religion be true, the establishment of it cannot make it false.

As far, therefore, as the truth of our holy religion is concerned, it stands wholly on it's own intrinsic merits, independent of human policy. To go into the proofs of that truth now, would be improper, since we are not on the subject; and, to a christian congregation, unnecessary. But, convinced as the people are of its truth, no good reason can be offered why it should not be established and protected by the state; and sufficient means provided for preserving it's religious, moral and political efficacy among the people.

When we are defending the Establishment we cannot avoid just touching on the principal arguments of it's enemies.

The modern impugners of Establishments are perpetually recurring to the times of the first promulgation of christianity for argu-

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ments against them; as if we were to look to that period for directions respecting the Church in it's more advanced state; than which nothing can be more absurd. It is obvious to the most common understanding that the directions of our Saviour and his Apostles, as to what regarded the Church's outward and temporal circumstances, apply only to it's then situation. St. Paul gave particular directions for the order and regulation of the churches he himself had founded, and which varied according to the local circumstances, with which they were attended, and the idolatry and hostile disposition of the ruling powers towards them. He did not, any more than his divine master, point out regulations for the church, when that idolatry should be extirpated and the ruling powers themselves become christian. These circumstances were left, both by our Lord and his Apostles, to the wisdom of those ages in which this flourishing state of christianity should take place; and to the prudence and discretion also of the different states which should from time to time become christian; and in which the established forms and regulations of the church might require to be as different as their local situations were distant, and yet the

the spiritual and essential parts of christianity remain the same.

But, because no instructions were given by Christ ~~to~~ his Apostles about connecting his religion with civil power, these disputants would infer that they forbade such connection ; which is nothing less than saying, that they forbade the success and completion of the object of Christ's coming into the world, and of the united endeavours and sufferings of his Apostles and Martyrs ; which was, by the gradual but irresistible force of divine truths, to overthrow the various systems of false religions in the world, and establish christianity on their ruins ; *when the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of God and his Christ.*

But, say these disputants, farther, " Christianity would prevail without the assistance of an establishment : " and they go back to the early periods of the church, and tell us how it prevailed against all opposition before it was established in the Roman Empire. Yes, it did : we glory, as much as they, that, by the irresistible force of its own truth, it bore down every obstruction which opposed

fed it's progress, and prevailed and flourished. This must have been it's boast, or it never could have been established at all.

But, I deny, before it was established, that it prevailed and flourished so much as the early christians wished it should. I would ask, whether these early christians were so delighted with the torments they suffered, that they desired to perpetuate them to future ages? Could they wish that the arm of government the ruling power in every state in which the glad tidings of the gospel might be preached, should continue in an everlasting hostility with christianity, and that it's professors should see no end of their own miseries and destruction? When Constantine was almost persuaded to be a christian, and was at length actually preparing to *establish Christianity* in his empire, did the christians of those days check his pious purpose? Did they tell him that to defend, protect and extend their religion would be to injure and destroy it? Did the cry and din of their complaints drown the imperial voice, that gave the religion of Christ to half the globe, that established it in the immense
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empire, over which he ruled? No; on the contrary, this glorious act was the object of their labours, an object worthy of their struggles and sufferings; the very consummation of their hopes and desires. This was that flourishing state they sought for Christianity, when it's enemies and persecutors were become friends and brethren; when it's professors found protection from the state, instead of being by the state harrassed and destroyed; and this was the case, not only with the Roman Empire, but with all the countries of the north of Europe, now christian. Wherever the systems of Error gave way, Christianity was established in their room.

Thus, the absurdity of these men is obvious when they would draw their argument against an Establishment from a period of the Church, in which it was impossible it could be established. The progressive and flourishing state of it, of which they boast, carries them to the point in dispute: Their own steps lead into the snare they try to avoid; namely, *an Establishment of Religion*. This is actually the result of their own premises; Christianity having been established, under Constantine, as soon as it sufficiently prevailed to effect it.

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But, say they again, "let the people elect their own Ministers: christianity would be taught without the help of the Church."—Of the universality of this teaching, however, we may venture to form some doubt, from the late great influx of French Philosophy; and, from this circumstance, that the remote and wild parts of the community, most in want of instruction, would, from their inability to maintain an instructor, be without one.

The wisdom of the state, therefore, is shown, in providing a regular Ministry, whose religious and moral influence shall reach to every part of the community; and prevent, moreover, the people from falling into the hands of Enthusiasts, philosophical, political, ignorant, or visionary. Society is already disturbed by sects of these casts, and it is the rational instruction and the decent order of the established ministry only that can prevent the farther mischief of wild, heterodox and jarring principles.

But, with respect to the electing of Ministers—infinite evils would arise out of it. Indecent competitions would disgrace the cause of religion, and all the mischiefs of popular

popular elections would inevitably ensue. There was a time when this mode was practised in the Church ; but it produced so many evils, ecclesiastical and political, that it was obliged to be given up, and a more rational mode adopted.

But, in fact, such is the universal Toleration allowed in this country, every man has the choice of his minister, tho' he do not elect him. In one place, he may behold his Redeemer robbed of the fulness of the Godhead ; of the strength with which he was girded for his important office ; and, in another, he may be borne away on the wings of vision ; and no one will attempt to interrupt the progress of his edification, or break airy texture of his dream. Neither the State, nor the Church, shows any disposition to controul the conscience, or the humour, of any man in these matters. A wide and diversified field of opinion is open to him, and he may take the path which suits his judgment or his fancy. But, while the presumptuous and the capricious chuse to wander in search of novelties, let not the more peaceable and prudent be deprived of their sober and discreet Instructor. Let not the body of the people
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say, we have no Christian teacher, no parish priest to keep us at home, where we ought to be.

The state, therefore, and thank God the people too, think that it is for the general order and happiness that a body of men should be appointed, for the express purpose of public instruction. They think that Christianity is as likely to be preserved and prevail amongst us when taught in a church as in a conventicle; or even in the chapel of a Socinian, where the integrity of the Scriptures is dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel, and the fragments disposed of as it may suit the system, the humour, or the politics of the arbitrary ruler of the place.

Thinking this, both the state and the people, if in idea they can be separated, value and love the Established Church. The state, as it is productive of public order and happiness; and the people, as it promotes their spiritual comfort and consolation, by dispensing the doctrines of the Gospel in truth and soberness. For this reason, they repine not at the stipends, which their ministers receive as a reward for their pastoral service; a reward, taken in the gross, but just sufficient

sufficient to maintain them in decency ; and, which is often, very often, much below an equivalent for their expensive and superior educations.

Moderate as the income of the clergy is in general, and bare as it is in numerous instances, they complain not. The hopes of bettering their conditions, by higher preferment, is an additional, tho' an inferior, motive to industry and exertions in their important avocations ; and thus, Subordination, which is so salutary in all well-regulated systems, is not without it's use in the Church. Whatever it's enemies may say, professional merit is the surest road to success, altho' it cannot be always successful ; considerable situations therein are seldom or never obtained without it ; and the higher departments are wholly out of the reach of any but those who are, in all respects, fully competent to such important stations.

But, what renders the maintenance of the clergy satisfactory to them is, the footing they stand upon with their hearers. When a clergyman has taken possession of his benefice, however scanty the fruits of it may be,

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he is in a state of independence. By which I do not mean that independence which includes an idea of opulence, but that which is of more consequence, to his pastoral character and to the advantages to be derived from it—he is independent on his Hearers. His little income is his own. He holds it by as good a tenure, by as strong an arm, as any other man holds his property, by laws of his country. This independence on his hearers places him in a proper situation to instruct them. His mind is at large, and free from those personal obligations which might prevent an open, unshackled, conscientious discharge of his functions. He performs his duties without the dread of offending those, on whose uncertain and capricious benevolence his existence and support depend. In any other state, His very faithfulness, if his doctrines, or his reproofs, did not suit the humour of his audience, might be followed by dismissal and penury ; and this has actually often been the case, where voluntary modes of maintenance have been adopted.

It is to no purpose to tell us that the first christian ministers were maintained by voluntary subscription. If their circumstances
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needed assistance from others, there could not have been any other mode of maintaining them. They were as yet neither countenanced by the state, nor protected by the laws. But as soon as a different mode was practicable, it was adopted ; and the christian world gloried in placing it's ministers in a state of independence with respect to their congregations.

Such are the arguments, with which our Establishment and *all Establishments* are assailed. The wisdom and experience of past ages, which attest their expedience, and even their necessity, for the preservation of religion, are set at nought. No abuse, no scurrility is spared to prejudice the minds of the public against the church and its ministers. No efforts, open and insidious, left untried, to effect the overthrow of this important and essential part of our constitution. The excellence and tolerant principles of the Church of England are acknowledged by all Christendom, except by those who (notwithstanding their perpetual and unprovoked hostility) most experience its moderation and brotherly-kindness. I have no scruple in asserting that, whether we regard the Church of England

land as an Establishment, or the temper of its ministers towards those of different opinions and professions, we shall find that they possess more substantial learning and more liberality than are to be found in any other church upon earth, whether established or not. Nor have there any where been found more powerful advocates, for civil and religious liberty, than among the eminent and learned of our establishment.

But, I hasten to conclude this part of my discourse.—In maintaining the excellence of our Church Establishment, I am but defending the Constitution of my country. I am bestowing but just applause on the wisdom of our ancestors, who so connected and incorporated our holy religion with civil government, that Church and State, as long as the constitution remains entire, are indissoluble. Their enemies have been uniformly the same; and if any malign and audacious power should ever be strong enough to effect their separation, it will not quit the conflict till they are both destroyed. Our annals furnish us with a memorable instance in the protectorate, of their common misfortunes and overthrow; and history will cease to have its proper
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use and effect, if it do not instruct mankind to profit by the examples it holds out, and teach them to avoid the errors and mischiefs of former ages.

If we trace our system of Government to it's origin, we shall find that there never was a time, in which it existed as a Constitution, without a Church Establishment : and, we may venture to assert, that those persons have but little regard for any Religion at all, who enveigh against the establishment of any. The common sense of mankind points out the necessity of subjecting the hearts of men to the controul of Religion ; and, of course, providing sufficient and competent Teachers, out of whose instruction that controul is to arise.

In fact, the Influence of Religion, or the *Fear of God*, as the Apostle expresses it in the text, was, is, and ever will be, necessary for the good order and happiness of society : without it, the beneficial effects of cultivation and learning would be defeated. A nation of philosophers, without religion, would be but a community of more ingenious savages. It's divine guidance and correction are no less salutary for the rich and potent, than

than for the poor and feeble. States and Empires should feel it's influence in their councils and decisions. It should pervade every department and every branch of Government, and from thence spread it's benign and efficacious power among the people for the common welfare and order.—These blessings are happily provided for and secured by the general, uniform, and constant activity of an *Establishment*, which reaches, instructs, and enlightens every part of the community.

I proceed, *secondly*, to consider the Civil Branch of our Constitution, so happily formed to secure our common freedom and happiness; and whose excellent Laws, both in their nature and execution, afford such admirable protection from private violence and oppression.

Unparalleled, indeed, are the blessings we enjoy in these respects! If the Apostle's advice, in the latter part of the text,¹ to *Honour the King*, which, in my former discourse, I explained to comprehend also submission to the Laws of the State in which we live—If this advice, I say, was binding on the Asiatic Christians, to submit in quietness
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to the Roman power, it comes with double force on us, who enjoy, under a more excellent form of Government, all the blessings of freedom and security which men are capable of in a state of society.

When men are actually in the enjoyment of any good, public or private, it should seem wholly unnecessary to take any trouble to convince them of their advantage. Human nature, however, is so constituted, that blessings long enjoyed often cease to be valued, and are only known by their absence. Thus, in private life, wealth and prosperity fail to satisfy their possessor, and their worth only is acknowledged when he is pining under the miseries of indigence and adversity. Men are often prodigal of health and spirits, till they suffer by disease and dejection. It is so with public blessings. Our glorious Constitution admits such extraordinary liberty in the subject; our political freedom is so gently touched by the restraints of government, that some are tempted to sport with the rod of power. It's accommodating temper seems to yield and bend to every wanton and wicked effort to break the bounds of legal order and controul; and the restless and impatient
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can only be taught justly to prize the blessings of public peace and security, by experiencing the intolerable evils of anarchy and confusion.

I am persuaded, that the more prudent and respectable part of the community are fully sensible of the inestimable advantages which result from our admirable Constitution. There are doubtless, however, *some*, whose restless and perturbed spirits are endeavouring, by various modes, to allure and alienate the public mind from it's just allegiance and long-established affection to it's form and principles. Political doctrines, subversive of all government, newly broached, are industriously recommended as worthy the notice of the people: Doctrines as impracticable as they are incoherent and absurd. Instead of being the principles of just Government, they are but the elements of public discord.

Error is always mischievous ; and, absurd and impracticable as these doctrines are, since their tendency is certainly to disturb the public tranquility, they are not unworthy of notice ; and it is a duty which every man owes to his station, to counteract their pernicious

nicious influence to the utmost of his power, to assert and maintain the unparalleled excellence of the Constitution we enjoy, and to establish and confirm in the minds of the public that salutary partiality for a form of Government, which has long been, and we trust will still continue to be, the boast and glory of Englishmen, and the admiration of the world.

For this purpose, I cannot propose any thing more in season than to trace a few of the outlines of our Constitution and Laws, in order to show how happily the whole is formed for securing to us all the blessings of a just and free Government.

If we trace the history of our Constitution, we shall find that it was by slow and almost insensible degrees it reached that state of perfection, in which we behold it at the Revolution. Before that period, altho' the rights of the people were, in some measure, defined; yet the crown, unaccustomed to controul, was continually endeavouring to regain it's ancient authority; and neither the lives, the liberties, nor the property of the people, were entirely secure. Such, however, was the steadiness, with which they

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purfued their object, that, in every ftruggle, fome new ftep was taken towards the confummation of their wifhes. When any advantage was obtained, they refted awhile and difpaffionately examined the ground, to fee whether any thing were yet wanting to complete the victory; and, at length, the fummit of political Liberty was gained and fecured.

This flow and gradual mode of obtaining our Freedom, is no mean fecurity for it's flability: a fort of pledge for it's future and perpetual enjoyment. By this regular and constitutional progrefs, no violence, intolerable to greatness and power, defeated, or is likely to defeat, the defigns and conditions of thofe compacts which afcertain our Rights. Our former Monarchs loft not their whole authority by one rash and mifchievous ftroke of ufurpation. Such portions only of their power, as were inconfiftent with public Liberty, were drawn away; and that with fo much moderation and difcretion, that no infurmountable difficulties offered to prevent the confeffion of the contending parties. The people fought only a juft, a practicable, and a legal Liberty. The iffue of every conflict was

was in their favour ; and, at the Revolution, all parties, the Crown, the Nobles and the People—*All* united and conspired to promote and secure public Freedom and Happiness.

Thus, our Liberty is not the production of anarchy and uproar. It was not obtained by bursting the bands of society; by a total disruption of all legal restraint, all political order. Our ancestors may be compared to skilful Statuaries. They proceeded slowly but scientifically in their design. The noble figure of our Constitution took gradually it's form under their patient and persevering labours. Every limb and every feature received it's just proportion, symmetry and expression ; and, at length, was finished and upreared the powerful and protecting Idol of our political adoration. They wisely dreaded any hasty error, any false stroke, in what they were about ; and were not like those arrogant and impetuous artists, who, wanting the skill and patience of their craft, think to strike out their *Palladium* by dashing to pieces the materials, of which it is to be formed.

The permanence of the Constitution has been answerable to the care and prudence
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with which it was modelled. Since the happy period of it's establishment, no nation ever enjoyed such unbounded Liberty, such political happiness, such legal security. The *triple form and nature*, which the legislative and governing power possesses, are the great, efficient Faculties, by which our Constitution and Freedom have been, and we trust will continue to be, preserved in undiminished vigour. Each constituent part has it's powers defined and ascertained. Each has a distinct, free, and independent agency; and the just and constitutional exercise thereof gives a perfection and an energy to the British form of Government, which surpasses the theory of ancient and the practice of modern Political Philosophy.

In Monarchies, purely so, the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person; which has ever proved a source of oppression and tyranny. Nor is it much otherwise in Republics. All the difference seems to lie in a soothing acknowledgment, which the rulers of republics (whether they call themselves a Senate, or by any other denomination) find it convenient to make, that they derive their power from the people.

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In the exercise of that power, the people themselves have generally experienced no less oppression. The fact is, that, in both forms, the various powers of proposing, making and executing the Laws, which ought to be in distinct hands, are united; and, in the consequences, it matters but little whether those powers be in the hands of one or of many.

And thus, the ambitious and perfidious among the conductors of ancient republics always had it in their power to act the tyrant, although perhaps they escaped the odium of the name. While the people flattered themselves that those governments were under their own immediate agency, their liberties have constantly been subverted by such as really possessed the powers of the state. What may be the event of republics newly established, time only can reveal: possessing, however, in some degree, the same principles, it is possible they may experience the same fate.

But, so admirably is the British Constitution formed, for giving perpetuity to public Liberty, that it is scarcely possible that it can ever sustain any material or lasting injury. The important powers of originating
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Laws and of executing them being in distinct branches of the legislature, all the mischiefs of other governments, arising from the union of these powers, are avoided. The three constituent parts have each of them an equal interest in preserving the Constitution in it's original purity. No Law can pass without the concurrent will of all ; and each possesses sufficient power to repel any hostile act, or any insidious design of the other. And thus, the constancy and vigilance of their mutual jealousy preserves the appropriate rights and privileges of each part, and the whole Constitution in it's full force.

On the preservation of this form and spirit of the Constitution the existence of our Liberties depends. It rests on the unbroken and undiminished powers of every branch of Government, of the Crown and of both Houses of Parliament, considered as distinct and independent bodies. We have nothing to fear as long as these all retain their constitutional strength and vigour. But, if incroachments be made on the prerogatives of the one, or on the rights and privileges of the other, so in proportion are our political freedom and happiness endangered.

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Strange as it may appear, our security actually arises from the paradoxical nature of these constituent powers of Government. They possess a temper of mutual hostility and union, at the same time. And, happily for all who live under this mixed influence, the only medium of their sympathy and agreement is the *Public Good*. This is the indissoluble tie, which connects them and creates in them a sort of political omnipotence. They admit of no combination, no confederacy, if the public good be not the avowed object; and to offer any other motive is to erect the standard of division between them. The three great legislative powers, formed by the constitution, are, as it were, the master-wheels of a stupendous and intelligent machinery, whose operations are always disturbed and out of order, unless they are employed for the public welfare; and the cords which unite them are burst with indignation, by one or the other, when the rights of either, or of the people, are attempted to be injured or destroyed.

Thus, by the singular form and temper of our Constitution, its health and vigour are preserved. The liberties of the people, more especially,

especially, are happily provided for, by the important share they take in the workings of this grand mechanism. By the wise deliberations and constitutional powers of their Representatives, they can and do easily correct those slight errors and deviations, which insensibly slide into the most perfect institutions, but which have not power to prevent their beneficial operations.

Such is the great outline of our admirable Constitution. It's powerful effects, in promoting the happiness of the people, are equal to the beauty of it's form, and the wise and liberal spirit which it breathes. By the preservation of that form, and the exertion of that spirit, it provides for every political blessing, and is, perhaps, the only constitution in the world, that has the power of dispensing, at the same time, public order and general liberty.

But, in nothing are the extraordinary advantages of our Constitution more satisfactorily apparent, than in the nature and execution of the Laws of the Land. Just and impartial to all, their power and their influence extend alike to every rank and every indi-

individual in the community. They afford no impunity to the rich and powerful more than to the poor and feeble. The mansion of opulence is not better secured from outrage than the cottage of poverty.

It is, perhaps, the best criterion to judge of the political freedom and happiness of a nation, to advert to the nature and execution of it's Laws. These are every where congenial with the temper of the ruling powers, from which they originate. They designate and ascertain the nature of the Government. We lament that, in most countries, they are the prompt and pliant instruments of oppression and tyranny. In our's, happily, they are incontestible proofs of the existence of public freedom and security. Our judicial Laws acknowledge their subordination to the constitutional. Our courts of justice are but the interior works and operations of that great, comprehensive power, which influences and embraces the whole system. They act on similar principles ; but, they are guided and controuled by the paramount and governing spirit of the Constitution, which suffers not the agency of any of it's ministers to defeat the great object it has in view—the security of public freedom and happiness.

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And, thus, there is no power existing in this country that can, with impunity, seize our persons or possessions, without the sanction of just and impartial laws. If by fraud or violence they have been injured, by an appeal to those laws we are armed with an irresistible power for redress. So dear are the life and property of the subject held by the constitution, that the laws guard and protect them both with a tenfold, impenetrable shield, which turns every way to meet the blow of the oppressor and repel his assaults. Under such a defence, every man, if he be but innocent, may defy the rage and malice of his enemies. Formed on the principles of common justice, the laws suffer none but the guilty and flagitious to be punished. To such only they are objects of terror. The manner and the impartiality with which they are administered, justly excite the admiration of all other nations. Here, every man's cause is in the hands of a free and unbiaſſed jury of his countrymen. Knowledge, integrity, and independence preside in our courts; which are effectually secured from the intrusion of any power that might openly oppose, or insidiously divert, the purpose of general and impartial Justice. There, while her one hand

hand wields the threatening sword over the guilty head, the other holds out support and protection to the injured and oppressed.

In fine, so excellent are the Laws, and the administration of them, in this country, that the words of the Jewish legislator are here strictly applicable : *“ Surely, this great nation is a wise and understanding people ! What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this Law, which I set before you this day ?*

And is it possible that a people, enjoying the singular and unparalleled advantages of so mild and liberal a Government, can grow dissatisfied and impatient ? Is it possible there can be political vipers in the country, malignant enough to shoot their venom against a Constitution, bestowing, in the largest degree, freedom, happiness, and security ? Ungrateful enough to sting and poison the warm and generous bosom that cherishes and protects them ?—Such we are assured there are. Unprincipled writers, who exist only in the troubles they create. We trust, however, that the Enemies of our Constitution are as few as they are contemptible, in comparison with those, who, while they enjoy
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it's blessings, have gratitude and wisdom enough to love, protect, and defend it.

But, impotent and ineffectual as the writings of these Incendiaries may prove with the wise and the respectable, it is the duty of every good and loyal subject to put forth his hand, to prevent any mischievous effects they may have on the multitude; who, sometimes, it is to be lamented, have not discretion enough to perceive and despise the artful designs and specious plots, into which they are invited and allured by the show of friendship, and with the seducing but vain pretence of bettering their condition. Public evils, as well as private, are generally the offspring of Error and Delusion; and, while we would strengthen and confirm our ancient and just affection for the Constitution of our country, we would guard the public mind against those shameless Libellers of it, who would tempt the people to hazard the blessings of Liberty, happiness and prosperity, for visionary and impracticable systems; which, as far as they have hitherto been reduced to practice, have been productive of nothing but anarchy and outrage; wars, fightings, tumults, and bloodshed.

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On the whole : In whatever point of view we regard the British Constitution, we behold it's advantages over every other in the world. If the fruits of political Liberty be *the ease and complacency, which the mind experiences, in the contemplation of personal security and the safe enjoyment of legal property*, (which I believe is not an improper definition) we, of this country, possess freedom in it's fullest extent. But, to possess this securely, sufficient power must some where be established for our protection. It is not to be obtained by the dissolution of Government ; but, by the exercise of it's just and powerful energies. Substantial Liberty cannot exist without some restrictions. It's range is wide and extensive, indeed, like that of a large and venerable forest ; which affords protection to the numerous herds that solace under it's ample shade, in abundance and security. But, like the forest, Liberty has it's bounds ; beyond which, if the rash or the unwary venture to pass, they become a prey, in both cases, to the licentious and the vile. It is not in the power of any state to make every subject equally prosperous and wealthy ; but all that can be done, by any form of Government, all the equality that society is capable of, is effected
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by our own. It bestows equal liberty and equal justice on every rank in the community, and secures the fruits of industry from the rapacious hand of public power, or of private fraud.

To preserve a Constitution so dear to us all, in it's established form and spirit, is the duty of every man, who has any regard for his own happiness, or that of the public. We trust, indeed, that there is no danger of mischief. The people have manifested no abatement of their ancient regard and affection for it.* All the constituent branches of the Legislature (such is it's admirable temper) conspire to preserve and maintain it's original strength and vigour. Since the period of it's establishment, all public men, of whatever rank or party, stand on the same ground—that of the Constitution. Whatever difference may arise about any particular measures of the Executive branch, or respecting any parts of this noble fabric, supposed to be impaired by time, no difference

* This is evinced by the influx of addressees, from all quarters, on the King's late Proclamation (dated the 21st of May, 1792) warning the public against the pernicious effects of Seditious Writings.

can arise as to the form, construction, and nature of the Constitution itself; which, whether we regard it either in Church or State, will ever be a subject worthy of our highest love and admiration.

In religious concerns it admits of the utmost degree of Toleration. No restraints are laid on such as dissent from the Establishment, but such as the State finds necessary for it's own safety; and no one will deny it's right to provide for that. Whenever these restraints can be removed, consistently with that safety, the generous temper of the government of this country is ever ready to comply with, and even prevent the wishes of such as think themselves oppressed; and scarcely a year passes, that does not display some instance of relief afforded to those, whose peaceable deportment evinces that restrictions are no longer necessary.

In fine; whatever motives the subjects of other countries may have to adopt new systems of Government, happily no such systems can find admission among a people, who have long enjoyed, and do now enjoy, more liberty, and more political blessings,
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than any other nation, under any other form of Government whatever. Without inquiring into the wisdom or the folly of the measures, which have produced those dreadful scenes of outrage, anarchy and bloodshed, which harrahs and waste a neighbouring state, every good man must lament their existence; and the slightest tendency to which, in this country, none can think of but with horror! Happily, no political assimilation can take place between the two nations; and it is surprising that any Persons could be found weak and wicked enough to set about so atrocious a work, for the purpose of exciting the same disorders among us. The respective conditions of the two countries have been, and still are, as widely dissimilar as Liberty is from Despotism, and public peace and prosperity from civil discord and misery.

Our's, in truth, my Brethren, is an enviable lot! We have happily passed the dangers and the conflicts of the political ocean, and are actually *in the haven, where we would be*. There let us rest, under the banners of substantial freedom and prosperity; nor rashly trust again our vessel, laden with the dearest pledges of Public happiness, to the perils
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of a boisterous and devouring element ;
wherein we behold, (and with pity we be-
hold) some struggling hard with the tempest,
and others broken and scattered on the
merciless rocks of public discord and con-
fusion.



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